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Black people are 'screwed' because white people are in charge, guest speaker says

Shanara Reid-Brinkley discusses how democracy cannot be restructured to combat anti-blackness



by GRADY GIBSON · Apr 19, 2017

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GRADY GIBSON/The Badger Herald

A University of Pittsburgh professor said systemic racism in the U.S. makes it impossible to restructure democracy to make it fair for black people at a University of Wisconsin lecture Tuesday.

The event, titled “Anti-Blackness and the Political: Millennials, Black Intellectuals, and the Re-shaping of American Politics,” focused on the “anti-black foundation” of the U.S. and changes in the black vote which have had major impacts on the country.

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One of the central themes Reid-Brinkley discussed was the idea that democracy cannot be reformed in a way that will combat anti-blackness. She said this is because the very concept of democracy was built on anti-blackness.

Reid-Brinkley said black people do not have a voice in the U.S. because of the way the country is structured. Black people will never truly know freedom in today’s society due to this, she said.

Problems such as global warming, genocide and colonization are the fault of white people, Reid-Brinkley said. She said these problems will remain unsolved as long as white people fill positions of power.

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“I think that we’re all screwed because white people are in charge,” Reid-Brinkley said.

Reid-Brinkley also said the “black vote” is shifting due to changes in the thoughts and priorities of young people.

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The Democratic National Convention started to see a loss in popularity among black millennials during the November 2016 presidential election, Reid-Brinkley said, as they no longer felt represented by the leaders the DNC put forth.

It is imperative for the Democratic Party to choose leaders who represent issues important to black millennials if they want to be successful in the future, Reid-Brinkley said.

“The DNC in the next 20 years is going to lose its voting bloc if it does not learn this lesson,” Reid-Brinkley said.

Reid-Brinkley will be heading two more events at the University of Wisconsin April 19 in Sterling Hall and April 20 in Sewell Social Sciences.

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- Men's Soccer
- Women's Soccer
- Men's Tennis
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- Point-counterpoint

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- Film
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